

## Quick Facts - Leading Causes of Death among Alaska Women<sup>1</sup>

Many of the leading causes of death among women, such as heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes, can be successfully prevented or treated if the warning signs are caught early enough.

- Cancer is the number one killer of Alaskan women. Lung cancer is the most common cause of cancer death among women in Alaska. The five most commonly diagnosed cancers among Alaska women for 2001, were breast (34.3%), lung (12.3%), colorectal (11.0%), uterus (6.4%), and thyroid (3.6%).<sup>2</sup>
- Heart disease is the second leading cause of death for Alaskan women. Often thought of as a man's disease, more and more women are dying from heart disease.
- Unintentional injuries is the third leading cause of death for women, resulting in a shortened life of an average of 26 years.
- Stroke is the number four killer of Alaskan women.
- Chronic lower respiratory diseases is the fifth leading cause of death.
- Diabetes is the sixth leading cause of death.
- HIV and sexually transmitted diseases also have a major effect on women's health.
  - In Alaska there have been 175 reported cases of HIV infection in women.<sup>3</sup>
  - There has been a 46% increase in the number of reported cases of gonorrhea from year 2002 to year 2003.<sup>4</sup>
  - In 2001 and 2002, Alaska reported the highest chlamydia case rates in the United States. The annual number of reported cases in women increased 31% (from 1,968 in 2001 to 2,576 in 2002). Peak rates occurred at ages 15 to 24 years.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> State of Alaska Dept. of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics, 2000 Annual Report. <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/bvs/publications/2000ar.htm>

<sup>2</sup> State of Alaska Dept. of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, Section of Epidemiology, Cancer Prevention and Control Program. <http://www.epi.hss.state.ak.us/>

<sup>3</sup> State of Alaska, Dept. of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, Section of Epidemiology, , HIV Infection in Alaska 2003, Epidemiology Bulletin #10, April 2004  
[http://www.epi.hss.state.ak.us/bulletins/docs/b2004\\_10.pdf](http://www.epi.hss.state.ak.us/bulletins/docs/b2004_10.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> State of Alaska, Dept. of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, Section of Epidemiology, , Gonorrhea in Alaska, 2002, Epidemiology Bulletin #19, July 2003  
[http://www.epi.hss.state.ak.us/bulletins/docs/b2003\\_19.pdf](http://www.epi.hss.state.ak.us/bulletins/docs/b2003_19.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> State of Alaska, Dept. of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, Section of Epidemiology, Chlamydia in Alaska 2002, Epidemiology Bulletin #18 July 2003  
[http://www.epi.hss.state.ak.us/bulletins/docs/b2003\\_18.pdf](http://www.epi.hss.state.ak.us/bulletins/docs/b2003_18.pdf)

## **Quick Facts - Health Risks and Preventive Health Practices among Alaska Women<sup>6</sup>**

Of Alaskan women aged 18 and older:

- 27% are overweight
- 20% are obese
- 23% smoke
- 24% do not get any leisure time physical activity
- 10% engage in binge drinking
- 1% engage in chronic drinking
- 6% engage in heavy drinking
- 4% have been told they have diabetes
- 21% have been told they have arthritis
- 13% have been told they have asthma
- 23% have been told they have high blood pressure
- 29.4% have been told they have high cholesterol
- 19% have no health care plan
- 15% need to see a doctor in the last year but could not afford it
- 49% of women have been tested for HIV (aged 18-65)
- 25% of women over 40 have not had a mammogram in the past 2 years
- 15% of women over 40 have never had a mammogram and breast exam
- 32% have not had their cholesterol checked within the past 5 years
- 42% of women over 50 have had colorectal cancer screening
- 41% of women over 65 have not had a flu shot
- 36% of women over 65 have not had a pneumonia shot

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<sup>6</sup> State of Alaska, Dept. of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, Section of Epidemiology, Health Risks in Alaska Among Adults, Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Survey 2000/2001 Annual Report. December, 2003